



## **Testimony to the Education Committee Public Hearing on March 21, 2022**

- **SB 273 - AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER CERTIFICATION**
- **SB 274 - AN ACT CONCERNING MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**
- **HB 5465 - AN ACT INCREASING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR SALARIES AND EXPANDING CHILD CARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILIES**

Good morning Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty and other members of the Education and Employment Advancement Committee. On behalf of the AACTE-CT, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the bills below. The Connecticut Chapter of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE-CT) is an association of thirteen public and private higher education institutions providing educator preparation programs (EPP) whose primary goal is to promote and support high quality teaching, education, and leadership in Connecticut schools.

### ➤ **SB 273 - AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER CERTIFICATION**

The AACTE-CT supports this legislation and has had discussions with the Department of Education on this important issue. There is definitely a need to update and modernize the educator preparation statutes and regulations, many of which are more than 20 years old. For example, [Insert specific example(s) of a statute or regulation that is obsolete or needs updating to year 2022].

The AACTE-CT wants to continue to be a part of the discussions and be able to participate in making recommendations to modernizing our laws because of the key role we play in the state's education systems. AACTE-CT is composed of the state colleges teacher preparation programs that provide our future teachers and administrators with the skills and expertise needed to educate our students in Connecticut's school system.

### ➤ **SB 274 - AN ACT CONCERNING MINORITY TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

The AACTE-CT supports this legislation and its goals of recruiting and retaining teachers of color to help ensure that Connecticut's educator workforce aligns with the students in the school systems in which they teach. While Connecticut has made strides in the past several

years, we need to continue to make gains and improvements so that all of our students in our school districts are being taught by people who represent the composition of the classroom.

➤ **HB 5465 - AN ACT INCREASING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR SALARIES AND EXPANDING CHILD CARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILIES**

The AACTE-CT supports this legislation. It is critical to note this bill will help address the fact that early childhood compensation matters.

However, certain provisions of this bill limit the student loan forgiveness program to only persons who graduate from public institutions of higher education. We are advocating strongly that this bill must include the accredited private colleges and universities that offer associate's or bachelor's degree in early childhood education. Student loan forgiveness is part of a multi-faceted compensation package. Student loan forgiveness needs to include private educator preparation programs because they constitute 50% of providers in early childhood educator preparation, also contribute innovative pathways and partnerships while having flexibility to respond to increased needs.

We would also point out that the early childhood educator preparation landscape is distinct from the larger educator preparation providers as preparation includes:

- a) two distinct age bands (Birth to Six and Pre-K age 3 to Grade 3),
- b) two distinct credential recognitions (CSDE #112 and #113 and OEC ECTC), and
- c) multiple settings for early care and education (family care, center-based community care, Head Start, public schools settings).

Also, the EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE established to address the incredible unmet needs for early care and education from birth to age six, with special attention to the infant and toddler needs, can and should address the preparation pipeline to match the compensation dialogues occurring in multiple civic and professional arenas.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on these bills. Please feel free to reach out to me or members of the AACTE-CT if you have any questions.

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